

**SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS DONATES \$200 THOUSAND TO THE
SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND**

Similar Donations Are Desperately Needed to Keep the Organization in Operation

SAN MANUEL INDIAN NATION, Calif. - November 13, 2003 – The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians today announced it donated \$200,000 to the San Bernardino Valley Lighthouse for the Blind in an effort to provide immediate financial support to the organization so that it can continue to operate in 2004 and beyond. Current economic conditions have resulted in a steep reduction in direct contributions to the Lighthouse for the Blind this year and sales at the organization's two thrift stores are in sharp decline, prompting an outreach to past donors, including the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, in an effort to keep the doors open at the school.

"Donations such as these are the lifeblood of the organization and we are counting on the generosity of the community now more than ever," said Robert McBay, executive director of the Lighthouse for the Blind. "We are reaching out to our friends and supporters in our community and seeking financial assistance to survive and keep the school operational for the visually impaired students. On behalf of our 340 students we want to express our gratitude to the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for their generous, continual support and encourage others to help us in this time of need."

"Education is top priority for our tribe and when we were approached by the Lighthouse for the Blind and made aware of their immediate needs we were compelled to make this contribution," said Deron Marquez, chairman of San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. "Our goal in making this donation is to support an outstanding organization and we hope others in the community will step forward with additional contributions so that this valuable community resource can continue to serve the needs of the blind students in our area."

Donations of automobiles, boats and recreational vehicles are strongly encouraged and are tax deductible. Please call 909-884-3121 to reach Bob or Sandy at the school or 909-885-3305 to reach Sandra at the Lighthouse for the Blind thrift store. Donations are also accepted in-person at the school at 762. N. Sierra Way, San Bernardino, Calif., 92410.

About the Lighthouse for the Blind

The Lighthouse for the Blind has been an incorporated, non-profit, California agency since 1951. For over 50 years, the organization has provided free services and transportation to 340 legally and totally blind students. The Lighthouse for the Blind does not receive funds from federal, state, city or county governments, but instead relies on charitable contributions from individuals, estates and community partners along with the funds generated from two thrift stores in the state. For more information, or to make a donation, please call 909-884-3121.

About the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

Descendents of the Serrano Indians, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians inhabited a territory spanning the San Bernardino Mountains, valley and adjoining desert lands for centuries. Today, the tribe is located on the San Manuel Reservation near Highland, Calif. Like other tribal lands in the United States, the San Manuel Reservation is a sovereign nation with its own system of government and tribal laws. The tribe operates the San Manuel Indian Bingo and Casino and the San Manuel Bottled Water Group, in addition to managing a variety of economic ventures. A partner in the community, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians actively contributes to a variety of projects in neighboring areas. Nearby cities and towns receive support from the tribe for cultural, social, and economic projects to benefit the common good of the communities in which the tribe's members live and work.

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